

STATEMENT OF SENATOR STROM THORNDIKE (D-SC)  
IN THE SENATE ON INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION  
FOR REVISION OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM,  
JUNE 24, 1957.

Mr. President, I want to make a few brief remarks with reference to the bill for revision of the electoral system which is being sponsored by the Senior Senator from South Dakota, the Senior Senator from New Jersey, the Junior Senator from Montana, and myself.

I believe the sponsorship of this bill is sufficient evidence that its intent is purely non-partisan and non-sectional.

Mr. President, the intent of the bill is to bring about changes in the electoral system, through the method provided for Constitutional amendments, so as to more exactly reflect the will of



the citizens of this Nation in Presidential elections.

I am convinced that it would create more interest in Presidential elections because each elector district would be represented in the electoral college by one elector from that district.

In addition to choosing one elector from each district, the voters also would choose two other electors on the basis of a State-wide vote to represent the State in the Electoral College.

This would mean that every vote would count more than under the present system when electors are chosen in most States by State-wide voting instead of the district system. Under the present system, it is not unusual for a candidate



to receive from 40 to 49 per cent of the popular vote in a State without receiving a single electoral vote.

The district system would more nearly reflect the candidate's proportional share of the popular vote in the Electoral College.

Such an improvement would greatly increase the possibility over the present system of nominating candidates best qualified for the offices of President and Vice President. It would no longer be necessary to limit the choices to a few persons from geographically strategic States.

Sectional considerations would be almost entirely eliminated from the standards now applied to prospective Presidential candidates in nominating



conventions.

This bill will provide for a system which was conceived by the framers of the Constitution and which was generally used in the early days of the Republic.

To my mind another important effect would be that of equalizing the voting power of individual citizens. Presently, citizens in New York vote for 45 electors, while in the smallest States they vote for only three. This proposed amendment to the Constitution would cause each citizen, regardless of where he lived to vote for three electors -- one in his own district and two in State-wide voting.

Mr. President, I am convinced that passage of this bill would do more to equalize the voting power of citizens in this country than any step taken since



the Constitution was adopted.

I hope the bill will be considered in the light it is being offered to the Senate -- as non-partisan and non-sectional Electoral system reform is an old subject, but there has been long consideration and no action on it. Now is the time for action.

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